

UDSD Awarded a Foreign Language Acquisition Program Grant for Mandarin Language Initiative

April 6, 2010 - **MEDIA, PA** — Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) commends Upper Darby School District on being awarded a Foreign Language Acquisition Program (FLAP) Grant for its Mandarin Language Initiative. Over the past three years, Upper Darby has offered a pilot, after school, credit-bearing course to 11th and 12th graders in Mandarin. More than fifty students have taken the Beginning Mandarin course and fifteen have completed Mandarin I in an after-school program. This grant will allow the District to undertake the planning necessary to establish a fully-developed curriculum for grades 9-12, to recruit a full-time certified Mandarin teacher, and to develop several innovative complementary program components that include an after-school cultural enhancement program, peer tutoring, a workshop series to involve middle school students, and a program to reach out to native speakers in the community.

Upper Darby is the second largest high school in Pennsylvania and has a highly diverse population of 3,666 students. The school has worked hard to compliment this diversity with programs, like the Mandarin Language program, to expand their students' worldview, and prepare them for a globally-competitive workforce.

"This is an exciting announcement for Upper Darby," said Congressman Sestak. "This program serves as a great example of linking non-native English speakers in the community with the school to promote two-way language learning, which meets one of the grant program's key priorities of the. I submitted a letter in support of this grant application in May of 2009 and wholeheartedly congratulate the District on their success. I would like to particularly recognize Ms. Abby Lang, Grant Coordinator for the School District, as well as the High School faculty and administration, who have consistently been committed to improving student achievement and maintaining a high level of expectations for student learning."

This grant will be in the amount of \$53,893 for the period June 2010 through May 2011. It is anticipated that the grant will be for a total of 3 years.

The Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) is offered through the Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students of the U.S. Department of Education. Additional information can be found in Congressman Sestak's 7th Congressional District Federal and State Grants and Resource Directory, available on his website, www.sestak.house.gov under the "Grants/ Appropriations" tab.

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from

Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. Congress.

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